ATTRIBUTES OF THE MUNAFIQIN

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Imam ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

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بسمِ اللّٰه الرحمن الرحيمِ

NIFAQ[1]: It is an incurable internal disease, in which a man may be filled with it while he is oblivious, for it is a matter hidden from the people, and frequently it can lead to a person thinking he is doing right while in fact he is spreading corruption. It is of two types: major and minor.

As for major nifaq, its recompense is to abide eternally in the lowest part of Hell. It is to outwardly display to the Muslims iman in Allah, His Books, His Messengers, and the Day of Judgment…But in reality one is devoid from all of that and disbelieves in it – not believing that Allah spoke words which were revealed to man, appointing a messenger unto mankind, guiding them by His permission and warning them of His might and punishment.

Yasir Qadhi

Indeed, Allah (ﷻ) exposed the munafiqin and exposed their secrets in the Quran and displayed to His slaves their affairs that they may be on guard against nifaq and its people. Three categories of people were mentioned in the beginning of surat al-Baqarah: The believers, the kuffar, and the munafiqin, and so He mentioned about the believers four verses, and about the kuffar two verses, and about the munafiqin thirteen verses due to their large numbers and the generality of their trial and the severity of their sedition upon Islam and its people.

[1] Nifaq most times gets translated as "hypocrisy" but its shar'i meaning is: outwardly displaying iman, while harboring kufr inside. May Allah protect us from it and grant us well-being.

Indeed, their affliction upon Islam is severe, due to their claims of affiliation, allegiance, and bringing victory to it, while in reality they are its enemies. Those who are ignorant think that what they are upon is sound knowledge and correctness, but it is the greatest extent of ignorance and corruption. [I ask you] by Allah, how many strongholds of Islam have they destroyed! And how many of its bastions have they uprooted the foundations thereof and ruined! And how many of its symbols have they erased! And how many of its raised flags have they left and abandoned! And how often have they struck at its roots with the pickaxes of misconceptions in order to uproot it! And how much have they filled the springheads of its drinking places in order to bury them and cut them off!

And thus Islam and its people continue to be afflicted and tried by them, and it continues to be hammered by their suspicions - assault after assault - as they claim all the while to be righteous reformers…

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ

"Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not."[2]

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ

"They want to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, although the disbelievers dislike it."[3]

They agreed to abandon the revelation, and are united in their abandonment of seeking guidance through it…

فَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ

[2] Surah al-Baqarah: 12
[3] Surah as-Saff: 8.

"But the people divided their religion among them into sects – each faction, in what it has, rejoicing."[4]

يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا

"Inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion."[5]

And because of that,

اتَّخَذُوا هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

"they have taken this Quran as [a thing] abandoned."[6]

The attributes of iman are not found in their hearts, so they do not recognize them; and its institutions with them have been erased, so they do not maintain them; and its sun has been eclipsed by the gathering of the darkness of their opinions and ideas, so they cannot see it. They do not accept the guidance of Allah which He sent with His messenger, nor do they give it any importance, nor do they see any problem in abandoning it for the sake of their own opinions and ideas. They have stripped the revealed text from its real status and they separated it from its significance and decisiveness; and launch against it a barrage of false ideas, with which they continue to carry out

Hamzah Yusuf

[4] Surah al-Muminun: 53.
[5] Surah al-An'am: 112.
[6] Surah al-Furqan: 30.

- ambush after ambush. It came upon them the way that a guest descends on stingy hosts, and so they received him in a way other than how they should have with acceptance and generosity. They received them from a distance, repelling them away. And they said, "You cannot pass us," and if that was inevitable, then these texts would only pass with difficulty.

In order to repel these texts, they prepared a variety of rules, principles, and when these texts came upon them, they said, "What have we to do with linguistic phenomena that do not bring us any conviction." Their general masses said, "Sufficient for us is what we found those that preceded us upon from among the late comers, for they are more knowledgeable than those predecessors and more solid in their methods of establishing the proofs and evidences. They are those who were overcome by simplicity and soundness of the heart, while not making time for laying out the foundations of examination. Rather, they dedicated their effort into doing that which was ordered and leaving that which was prohibited. Thus, the way of the late comers is more sound in knowledge and more precise, while the way of the predecessors was more ignorant, yet safer."

Thus they made the status of the revealed text of the Quran and the Sunnah like that of the khalifah in these times - his name minted on coins and exalted on the pulpits during the khutbah, while the judgment of others is that which is enforced, while his judgment is neither heard nor accepted. They cloak themselves in the gown of iman, while their hearts are deviated and lost, filled with malice and disbelief. Their external is like that of the Ansar while their internal is aligned to disbelief. Their tongues are the tongues of the Muslims, while their hearts are the hearts of those who transgress against them, and they say,

آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُم بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

" 'We believe in Allah and the Last Day,' but they are not believers."[7]

[7] Surah al-Baqarah: 8.

Their capital is deception and conspiring, and their merchandise is lies and betrayal. Their intellects are driven by worldly benefits - both the believers and disbelievers are pleased with them - while they are secure from them both.

يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ

"They [think to] deceive Allah and those who believe, but they deceive not except themselves and perceive [it] not."[8]

The diseases of doubts and desires have consumed their hearts and thus destroyed them; and evil intentions have overcome their ambitions and thus corrupted them. Consequently, their corruption has thrown them into destruction, and the doctors are unable to cure them.

فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

"In their hearts is a disease, so Allah has increased their disease; and for them is a painful punishment because they [habitually] used to lie."[9]

Whoever falls victim to the claws of his own doubts will have his iman torn to pieces, and whosoever attaches his heart to the evil of his tribulations, it will cast him into the burning fire of torment, and whosoever gives ear to his own deceptive misconceptions will find it standing between his heart and belief. Their corruption on the earth is indeed immense, but most people are heedless to it.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ

[8] Surah al-Baqarah: 9.
[9] Surah al-Baqarah: 10.

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ

"And when it is said to them, 'Do not cause corruption on the earth,' they say, 'We are but reformers.' Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not."[10]

Those from them who follow the Quran and Sunnah do so only for show, like a donkey carrying volumes of books. They disregard and reject it, while considering its followers to be fools.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ

"And when it is said to them, 'Believe as the people have believed,' they say, 'Should we believe as the foolish have believed?' Unquestionably, it is they who are the fools, but they know [it] not."[11]

Each one of them has two faces: one face with which he greets the believers, and another face with which he returns to his disbelieving brothers. Likewise, he has two tongues: one based on which the believers receive him, and another with which he gives vent to his hidden secret.

'Adnan 'Ar'ur

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ

[10] Surah al-Baqarah: 11-12.
[11] Surah al-Baqarah: 13.

"And when they meet those who believe, they say, 'We believe'; but when they are alone with their shayatin, they say, 'Indeed, we are with you; we were only mockers.' "[12]

They have rejected the Quran and the Sunnah, mocking its followers and looking down on them. They refuse to submit to the judgment of the Quran and Sunnah due to their excitement over what they possess of knowledge, whose increase won't bring them anything but arrogance and pride, and thus you will find them always mocking those who hold to the evident revealed text. However,

اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

"Allah mocks them and prolongs them in their transgression [while] they wander blindly."[13]

They pursue their trade in oceans of darkness, riding the vessels of doubts, as suspicions flow by them in illusionary waves. Strong winds disturb and play with their boats, casting them into destruction.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ

"Those are the ones who have purchased error [in exchange] for guidance, so their transaction has brought no profit, nor were they guided."[14]

The fire of iman is illuminated for them and so they perceive in its light guidance and misguidance. Then, that fire is extinguished and what remains for

[12] Surah al-Baqarah: 14.
[13] Surah al-Baqarah: 15.
[14] Surah al-Baqarah: 16.

them is the burning amber of the red hot ashes, and with it they are punished and in its darkness they wander blindly.

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ

"Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see."[15]

The hearing of their hearts is overburdened with deafness and therefore cannot hear the caller of iman, and the eyes with which they see are covered with a veil and therefore cannot see the realities of the Quran, and their tongues are mute from the truth and therefore are unable to speak it.

صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ

"Deaf, dumb and blind – so they will not return [to the right path]."[16]

The rain of revelation pours down upon them, containing life for the hearts and souls, but all they hear from it is its thunderous threats and promises, and the decrees that are assigned upon them night and day. And so they thrust their fingers into their ears, and cover themselves with their garments, seeking earnestly to flee, retracing their footprints in an attempt to escape. However,

[15] Surah al-Baqarah: 17.
[16] Surah al-Baqarah: 18.

they are called out in public, and their reality is exposed before the people of clear sightedness, while two parables are struck for them, each parable in accordance with the situation of one of the two parties: those who debate and those who blindly follow.

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِم مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ

"Or [it is] like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death. But Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers."[17]

Their foresightedness was too weak to tolerate what was contained within the rain of the lightning of illumination and the brightness of its meanings. Their ears were unable to bear the thunder of its promises, orders, and prohibitions. And so at that they halted in confusion; the one with hearing unable to benefit from his hearing, and the one with sight unable to find his way using it.

يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُم مَّشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"The lightning almost snatches away their sight. Every time it lights [the way] for them, they walk therein; but when darkness comes over them, they stand [still]. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent."

They possess characteristics that are known through the Quran and Sunnah, clear for those who reflect and are endowed with insight and iman. By Allah, they are people given to insincerity, and that is the most evil station where man

[17] Surah al-Baqarah: 19.

can be positioned. Laziness has caused them to become careless in fulfilling the orders of the All-Merciful, thus making sincerity something heavy upon them.

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَىٰ يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

"Indeed, the munafiqin [think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily, showing [themselves to] the people and not remembering Allah except a little."[18]

They are like a lost sheep between two flocks, going from one flock to another while not settling among either one of them. They are standing between two parties, analyzing which one of them is stronger and more honorable.

مُّذَبْذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ لَا إِلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ وَلَا إِلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا

"Wavering between them, [belonging] neither to the believers nor to the disbelievers. And whoever Allah leaves astray - never will you find for him a way."[19]

They sit in wait and watch what will be the fate of the people of the Quran and Sunnah. And if it were the case that they are granted victory from Allah, they say, "Were we not with you?" And they would swear by Allah their strongest oaths. And if were the case that the enemies of the Quran and Sunnah were victorious the would say to them, "Don't you see that the bond of brotherhood between us is strong, and the kinship between us close?"

[18] Surah an-Nisa: 142.
[19] Surah an-Nisa: 143.

Whosoever wishes to know who they are then let him learn of their characteristics from the words of the Lord of creation. One would then not require after that any more evidence.

الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِن كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا

"Those who wait [and watch] you. Then if you gain a victory from Allah, they say, "Were we not with you?" But if the disbelievers have a success, they say [to them], "Did we not gain the advantage over you, but we protected you from the believers?" Allah will judge between [all of] you on the Day of Resurrection, and never will Allah give the disbelievers over the believers a way [to overcome them]."[20]

The listener is amazed by the mildness and sweetness of their sayings, while calling Allah to bear witness as to what his heart contains of lies and dishonesty. You will see him negligent upon the truth, and attentive to falsehood, so take heed of their characteristics from the words of the Holy, the Bestower of Peace.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهِدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ

"And of the people is he whose speech pleases you in worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the fiercest of opponents."[21]

What they enjoin upon their followers entails the corruption of the land and the people. What they prohibit is that which entails what is in their interests in

[20] Surah an-Nisa: 141.
[21] Surah al-Baqarah: 204.

this world and in the Hereafter. You would find one of them standing among the people of iman, offering salah, making dhikr, and striving in a state of zuhd.

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ

"And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals. And Allah does not like corruption."

Suhaib Webb

They are all alike, enjoining the evil after having themselves committed it, and forbidding the good after having themselves abandoned it. They are miserly in giving their wealth in Allah's cause and in ways which please Him. How many times has Allah reminded of His blessings, yet they turn away from His reminder and disregard it! And with how many of them has He exposed their reality to His believing slaves so that they may stay away from them! So listen carefully, O believer!

الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُم مِّن بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ ۚ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"The hypocrite men and hypocrite women are of one another. They enjoin what is wrong and forbid what is right and close their hands. They have forgotten

Allah, so He has forgotten them [accordingly]. Indeed, the hypocrites – it is they who are the defiantly disobedient."[22]

Erdogan

If they are tried according to the clear revelation you find in them reluctance. And if you call them to rule by the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His messenger (ﷺ) you witness them turning away in aversion. If you could only see their reality you would recognize the vast gulf between them and guidance; you would see the severeness with which they turn away from the revelation.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنكَ صُدُودًا

"And when it is said to them: 'Come to what Allah has sent down to His messenger,' you see the munafiqin turning away from you with aversion."[23]

So how can they be successful and guided after their intellects and path have been afflicted with such; [how can they] rid themselves of evil and misguidance that they are in! They purchased kufr at the expense of iman. And is there any losing trade worse than this! They exchanged sealed nectar for a blazing fire.

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا

[22] Surah at-Tawbah: 67.
[23] Surah an-Nisa: 61.

"How then, when a catastrophe befalls them because of what their hands have sent forth, they come to you swearing by Allah: 'We meant no more than goodwill and conciliation' "[24]

The vileness of doubts and suspicion clings to their hearts, and they can find no way of absolution from them.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل لَّهُمْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

"They are those of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts; so turn aside from them, admonish them, and speak to them an effective word to reach their inner selves."

Muhammad ibn Salman

May they perish! How far away are they from the reality of iman! How false is their claim to enlightenment! They are in one valley, and the followers of the Messenger are in another. Allah (جل جلاله) in His Book has taken an oath by Himself, the magnitude of such oath realized by those endowed with insight and whose hearts carry in them the awe and greatness of Him. Thus He (جل جلاله) said, warning His allies and revealing the state of these people,

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

[24] Surah an-Nisa: 62.

"But no, by your Lord, they are not believers until they make you [O Muhammad] judge in all their disputes between them, find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept [them] with full submission."

You will find one of them swearing an oath before he speaks without anyone even objecting [beforehand] to what he says, due to him knowing that the hearts of the people of iman do not find any reassurance in him. So he uses his oath as a screen from any evil suspicions towards him. It is like how the people of misgivings lie, taking oaths to beguile the listener into thinking they are being truthful.

اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"They have taken their oaths as a screen; thus they hinder [others] from the path of Allah. Verily, evil is what they used to do."[25]

Abu Qatadah (right) and al-Maqdisi (left)

May they perish! They embarked upon the journey with the caravan of iman, then when they saw the length of the road and how far the destination was, they turned on their heels and left. They think they found a good life and sleep comfortably in their beds, but they have not really lived and in their sleep they have not benefited. It will not be except for a single shout, and they will all stand forth, leaving their food behind in extreme hunger. How will they be at the Meeting? They knew then they rejected; they became blind after they had seen the truth.

[25] Surah al-Munafiqun: 2.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا فَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ

"That is because they believed, and then they disbelieved; therefore, their hearts are sealed, so they can not understand."[26]

[They could be] the best of men in physical appearance, have the most eloquent tongue, and the sweetest words, yet have the most vile of hearts. They are like propped up planks of wood with no fruit. They have been cut off from the source of their growth, and as such rest on a wall to keep them upright so that people do not walk over them.

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَقُولُوا تَسْمَعْ لِقَوْلِهِمْ ۖ كَأَنَّهُمْ خُشُبٌ مُّسَنَّدَةٌ ۖ يَحْسَبُونَ كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ هُمُ الْعَدُوُّ فَاحْذَرْهُمْ ۚ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ

"When you look at them, their bodies please you; and when they speak, you listen to their words. They are as planks of wood propped up. They think every cry is against them. They are the enemies, so beware of them. May Allah curse them! How are they perverted!"[27]

They delay the salah to the latest possible time: the dawn [salah] as the sun begins to rise and 'asr as the sun begins to set at which they peck the ground as a crow. It is merely a salah of the limbs, not of the heart; and while in it they are like a fox being certain he is being hunted looking to and fro. They do not attend the jama'ah [salah], rather they stay in their homes or shops. When they argue they act rudely; when they make an agreement they violate it; when they speak they lie; when they promise they break it; and when they are entrusted with something they betray. This is the manner in which they deal with the creation, and that is the manner in which they deal with the Creator. Look at their characteristics at the beginning of [surah] al-Mutaffifin and at the end of

[26] Surah al-Munafiqun: 3.
[27] Surah al-Munafiqun: 4.

[surah] at-Tariq, for no one can detail to you their characteristics like one who is All-Aware.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

"O prophet! strive against the kuffar and munafiqin, and be harsh against them; their abode is Jahannam - worst indeed is that destination."[28]

The majority of them are the lowest, and the strongest of them are weak. The most ignorant of them thinks himself high and mighty. They are misled about Allah and are ignorant of His grandeur.

وَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنكُمْ وَمَا هُم مِّنكُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْرَقُونَ

"They swear by Allah that they are from you, but they are not from you; rather, they are a people who are afraid."[29]

When the people of the Sunnah are met with security, aid, and victory they are anguished. And if they were to be met with tribulations and tested so that their sins and evil deeds may be expiated they become joyous. That is the reality of their heritage, and in no way do those who inherit from the Messenger compare to those who inherit from the munafiqin.

Abu Eesa (left), Haitham al-Haddad (middle), Yasir Qadhi (right)

[28] Surah at-Tawbah: 73.
[29] Surah at-Tawbah: 56.

إِن تُصِبْكَ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْكَ مُصِيبَةٌ يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَا أَمْرَنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَيَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُمْ فَرِحُونَ قُل لَّن يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

"If good befalls you, it grieves them, but if a calamity overtakes you, they say: 'We took our precaution beforehand,' and they turn away rejoicing. Say: 'Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Protector.' And in Allah let the believers rely."[30]

And He (جل جلاله) said about the two different preceding paths, and that the truth is not prevented due to the persistent of the people of aberration and confusion.

إِن تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِن تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

"If something good happens to you, it grieves them, but if some evil overtakes you, they rejoice at it. However, if you remain patient and have taqwa, not the least harm will their cunning do to you. Verily, Allah surrounds all that they do."

Allah abhors their obedience due to the filth of their hearts and corrupt intentions. And so, He made them lag behind and made them sit back. He hates for them to come near Him and His vicinity because of their affection to His enemies. As such, He distanced them and discarded them. They turned away from His revelation so He turned away from them and were sentenced with misery. He judged them with a just ruling, and they have no hope of any success unless they become of those who repent. He (جل جلاله) said,

وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ لَأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً وَلَٰكِن كَرِهَ اللَّهُ انبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ وَقِيلَ اقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ

[30] Surah at-Tawbah: 50-51.

"And if they had intended to march out, certainly, they would have made some preparation for it, but Allah was averse to their being sent forth, so He made them lag behind, and it was said [to them]: Sit you amongst those who sit [at home].' "[31]

Then He mentions the wisdom behind His making them lag and sit behind, and closing His door to them, and that this is because of His kindness to His allies and for their benefit.

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُم مَّا زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا وَلَأَوْضَعُوا خِلَالَكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمُ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمَّاعُونَ لَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

"Had they marched out with you, they would have added to you nothing except disorder, and they would have hurried about in your midst [spreading corruption] and sowing sedition among you - and there are some among you who would have listened to them. And Allah is All-Knower of the dhalimin."[32]

The texts of the Revelation bore down on them heavily, so they could not stand it; and being unable to carry them, they renounced them. Unable to keep the Sunnah they ignored it. They found the texts of the Book and Sunnah conflicting with their whims, so they formulated laws to reject them and defend themselves with. Allah has uncovered their curtain and exposed their secrets and has given to His slaves their parables.

Know, that each group that comes after them are just like them, so He has mentioned their characteristics and descriptions to His allies in order for them to be aware of them. He said,

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"That is because they hate that which Allah has sent down, so he has made their

[31] Surah at-Tawbah: 46.
[32] Surah at-Tawbah: 47.

deeds fruitless."[33]

This is for whoever finds the texts of the Revelation weighing heavily upon him, so he sees them coming between him and between his innovations and whims. It is to him a solid structure face-to-face. And thus he attempts to trade them for false speech and substitute them for something insignificant. That was followed by their inner and outer corruption.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ (*) فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ (*) ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"That is because they said to those who hate what Allah has sent down: 'We will obey you in part of the matter.' But Allah knows their secrets. Then how [will it be] when the angels will take their souls at death, smiting their faces and their backs? That is because they followed that which angered Allah and hated that which pleased Him. So He made their deeds fruitless."[34]

They try to cover up their nifaq, but Allah has revealed it upon their faces and their loose tongues and tagged them with a mark that is not hidden from those with foresight and iman. They think that if they hide their kufr and display their iman they will have access to profits. But how when the All-Seer has unveiled them to you?

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَن لَّن يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ (*) وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُم بِسِيمَاهُمْ ۚ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ

"Or do those in whose hearts is a disease think that Allah will not bring to light

[33] Surah Muhammad: 47.
[34] Surah Muhammad: 26-28.

all their hidden ill-wills? Had We so willed, We could have shown them to you, and you will recognize them by their marks; but indeed, you will recognize them by the tone of their speech. And Allah knows your deeds."[35]

How will they be when they are gathered on the Day of at-Talaq, and Allah (jalla wa jalahu) uncovers His shin? [The Day when] they are called to prostrate but will not be able to.

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَالِمُونَ

"Their eyes will be cast down and ignominy will cover them; they were called to prostrate themselves [in the life of the dunya], while they were in a good and healthy state."[36]

Or how will they be when they are crammed together to walk the bridge over Jahannam? A bridge thinner than a blade of hair and sharper than the tip of the sword, easy to fall off, entrenched in darkness, with none being able to cross it except those guided by light showing where to place one's feet. Amongst the people light is divided, the brightness of which governs the swiftness each person will cross. They are given a superficial light to accompany the people of Islam, just as they used to be with them in this world outwardly with salah, zakah, hajj, and siyam. When they reach the middle their light is blown out by the sharp gust of nifaq, and they come to a halt with their hands out. They attempt to move but cannot pass. A wall with a door is placed between them and the people of iman and its keys.

The inside where the believers reside is filled with mercy, while on the outside where they find themselves is punishment and a curse. They call out to those who were just with them from the delegation of iman, who in the distance sparkle like stars.

[35] Surah Muhammad: 28-29.
[36] Surah al-Qalam: 43.

انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِن نُّورِكُمْ

"Wait for us! Let us get something from your light!"[37]

"In order for us to be able to cross in safety! Our lights have been extinguished! And it has been made impermissible to pass except with a lamp of light."

قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا

"It will be said: 'Go back to your rear, then seek a light!' "[38]

[Meaning:] Where the lights were apportioned. No one will stop to assist them in such a situation! How will we stand on this bridge? How will another help another on that path? How will a friend assist a friend that Day? They will remind the believers that they were with them and accompanied them in this world, just as a traveler reminds the resident that he traveled with him on his journey.

أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ

"Were we not with you?"[39]

We fasted like you fasted; we prayed like you prayed; we recited like you recited; we affirmed like you affirmed; we did hajj like you did hajj.

We have not recalled all of these peoples' attributes and what we left - by Allah - is more than what we mentioned. One could almost say that all of the Quran is in reference to them due to the mere plentitude of them on the face of the earth and in the hollows of the graves. And thus the earth is not empty of them for the believers to go about their day undisturbed by these

[37] Surah al-Hadid: 13.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Surah al-Hadid: 14.

wild beasts of the desert. Hudhayfah (*radiyallahu 'anhu*) once heard a man saying, "O Allah! Destroy the munafiqin!" So he said to him, "O nephew, if He was to destroy the munafiqin you would find yourself walking the streets alone because hardly anyone would be left."

By Allah, the hearts of the first predecessors were torn to shreds in fear of nifaq, due to them knowing its major and minor manifestations, and its generalities and details to the point where they feared being one of the munafiqin. 'Umar ibnul-Khattab said to Hudhayfah (*radiyallahu 'anhuma*), "O Hudhayfah! I ask you by Allah, did the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) count me as being from them?" He replied, "No, and I will not reply to this to anyone after you." Ibn Abi Mulaykah said, "I met thirty companions of Muhammad (ﷺ) and all of them feared nifaq for himself, and none of them said that his iman was like the iman of Jibril amd Mikail."[40] Al-Hasan al-Basri said, "No one feels secure from it (i.e., nifaq) except a munafiq. And no one fears it except a mumin." It has been mentioned that some of the companions would supplicate: "O Allah! I seek refuge in you from the khushu'[41] of nifaq." And when it was asked, "What is the khushu' of nifaq?" It was said back, "That you see the limbs having khushu', while the heart has none."

By Allah, their hearts were overflowing with iman and yaqin, yet their fear of nifaq was severe and weighed heavily upon them. The iman of many people does not come anywhere close to their iman, yet they claim to have iman like that of Jibril and Mikail!

The plant of nifaq grows out of two stems: the stem of lying and the stem of show-off. And it grows from two ways: weakness in foresight and weakness in determination. When these four factors exist, the plant of nifaq grows firm. However, it grows on the side of flowing water on the edge of cliffs, so when it sees the flood of reality on the Day when all the secrets are disclosed and the graves emptied, and the heart's contents are brought to light, the one whose capital was nifaq will discover that all he attained was a mirage.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمْآنُ مَاءً

[40] Related by Imam al-Bukhari.
[41] Khushu' carries the meaning of 'humility' and 'humbleness'.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِندَهُ فَوَفَّاهُ حِسَابَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

"As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing; but he finds Allah with him, Who will pay him his due. And Allah is swift in taking account."[42]

Their hearts are heedless of the good, but their bodies are seen doing so. Indecent deeds are frequently performed by them, and so when they hear the truth their hearts are too hard to accept it, but when they see falsehood and hear fallacy, their hearts openly accept it and lend an attentive ear.

These, by Allah, are the signs of nifaq; so beware of them, O man, before the Judgment descends down upon you: when they give a covenant they are not loyal; when they promise they break it; when they speak they do not speak with justice; when they are called to obedience they falter; when they are told: 'come to what Allah revealed and to the Messenger' they turn away; but when it falls in-line with their whims they rush to it.

Leave them to what they have chosen for themselves from disgrace, shame and loss. Do not rely on their covenants and do not trust their promises, for indeed they are liars. They are the same as those who proved treacherous with Allah.

وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ عَاهَدَ اللَّهَ لَئِنْ آتَانَا مِن فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (*) فَلَمَّا آتَاهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ (*) فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

"And of them are some who made a covenant with Allah [saying]: 'If He bestowed on us of His bounty, we will verily, give charity and will certainly be among those who are righteous. Then when He gave them of His bounty, they

[42] Surah an-Nur: 39.

became stingy, and turned away, averse. So He punished them by putting nifaq in their hearts till the Day whereon they shall meet Him, because they broke that which they had promised to Him and because they used to tell lies."[43]

May Allah send salah and salam upon our prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions.

[43] Surah at-Tawbah: 75-77.

أهل التوحيد
Publications